

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-20 and 23-25 are pending in the application. Claims 1-20 are amended; Claims 23-25 are added; and Claims 21 and 22 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is added.¹

In the Office Action, Claim 1 was objected to as containing informalities; Claims 21-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 as directed to non-statutory subject matter; Claims 1-5, 12, and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Tanaka et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0114466 A1, herein “Tanaka”); Claims 6-9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tanaka in view of Oho et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0184515 A1, herein “Oho”); Claims 10-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Tanaka; and Claims 13-20 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Oho in view of Tanaka.

Applicants have canceled the Abstract and submit a new Abstract herewith. No new matter is added.

Regarding the objection to Claim 1, Applicants have removed the language to which the Office has objected. Applicants respectfully request that the objection to Claim 1 be withdrawn.

Regarding the rejections of Claims 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 101, Applicants have canceled those claims. Applicants submit that the rejection of Claims 21-22 under 35 U.S.C.

¹ The amendment to Claims 1, 13, and 19 may find support at least in the specification at the paragraph bridging pages 15-16. The amendment to Claim 20 may find support at least at Claim 1 and in the specification at the paragraph bridging pages 15-16.

§ 101 is moot. Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of Claims 21-22 under 35 U.S.C. § 101 be withdrawn.

Independent Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Tanaka.

In response to this rejection, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claim 1 recites novel features not taught or rendered obvious by the applied reference.

Independent Claim 1 recites, in part, an information device, including

means for storing user data including (a) grouped device identification information for grouping and identifying a plurality of information devices that includes the information device and whose information devices are configured to decrypt the encrypted content, (b) key information for decrypting the encrypted content and which is commonly provided to a device group configured to include the plurality of the information devices, and (c) a group identifier provided to the device group, wherein the means for storing the user data stores the grouped device identification information and the key information together with the group identifier

Turning to the applied reference, Tanaka is directed to an information processing method used for preventing content from being copied and used without a license. Tanaka discusses usage conditions of the content, such as a right to record the content on a CD-R and a number of times the content can be copied to a portable device.² Tanaka also describes organizing device keys into a hierarchical tree structure.³ According to Tanaka, a key at each node of the hierarchy is associated with a category such as “equipment using a semiconductor memory.”⁴

The Office Action appears to assert that the recited third memory means for storing key information for content decryption commonly provided to each device group together

² Paragraph [0121].

³ Paragraph [0137].

⁴ Paragraph [0141].

with a group identifier provided to each device group reads on Tanaka. However, Tanaka merely discusses a usage condition of a number of times that content can be copied to a portable device. Tanaka is silent regarding *to which* portable devices the content can be copied. Further, although Tanaka discusses associating device keys with a category of equipment, Tanaka does not discuss commonly providing the device keys to the category of equipment. Thus, Applicants respectfully submit that Tanaka fails to disclose or suggest means for storing user data including **key information** which is **commonly provided to a device group configured to include a plurality of information devices**, as recited in amended Claim 1.

Further, under an interpretation that a device group configured to include a plurality of information devices reads on a Tanaka category of equipment that includes all portable devices, Applicants submit that there would be no need to provide a group identifier to such a category. That is, because Tanaka does not differentiate between smaller groups within a category that have similar rights, Tanaka does not require a group identifier. Thus, Applicants submit that it is not obvious in view of Tanaka that an information device include means for storing user data including a group identifier provided to a device group configured to include a plurality of information devices, as recited in amended Claim 1.

Thus, Applicants submit that independent Claim 1 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably defines over Tanaka.

Independent Claims 13 and 19-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Oho in view of Tanaka. In response to this rejection, Applicants

respectfully submit that amended Claims 13 and 19-20 recite novel features not taught or rendered obvious by the applied references.

Claim 13 is directed to an information server configured to enable an encrypted content to be used. The information server, in part, includes

means for associating information about a device group to which an information device configured to decrypt the encrypted content belongs and a group identifier . . . ; and means for registering . . . , [and] for associating grouped device identification information . . . and key information . . . to the group identifier . . . , and for providing the grouped device identification information and the key information to all information devices in the device group.

Turning to the applied references, Oho is directed to a rights management technology with which a plurality of consumer-electronics products can share the same digital rights. At page 9, lines 5-6, the Office Action appears to concede that Oho does not disclose or suggest a service registration processing means for associating grouped device identification and key information for content decryption with the group identifier. Applicants submit that Oho does not disclose or suggest means for associating grouped device identification information and key information to a group identifier, and for providing the grouped device identification information and the key information to all information devices in a device group, as recited in amended Claim 13.

To remedy this deficiency, the Office Action relies on Tanaka. However, although Tanaka discusses associating device keys with a category of equipment, Tanaka does not discuss providing the device keys to all the devices in the category of equipment. Thus, Applicants submit that Tanaka fails to disclose or suggest means for associating grouped

device identification information and key information to a group identifier, and for providing the grouped device identification information and the key information to all information devices in a device group, as recited in amended Claim 13.

Thus, Oho and Tanaka, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest the means for registering and for associating recited in amended Claim 13. Applicants respectfully submit that independent Claim 13 (and all associated dependent claims) patentably defines over any proper combination of Oho and Tanaka.

Turning to the rejection of Claim 19, the Office Action at page 11, lines 18-20, apparently concedes that Oho fails to disclose or suggest a service registration processing means for associating grouped device identification information and key information with the group identifier, and providing the grouped device identification information and the key information to all information devices in the device group to which the information device belongs. Further, Tanaka merely describes associating device keys with a category of equipment and does not discuss providing the device keys to all devices in the category of equipment. Applicants submit that Oho and Tanaka, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest means for associating grouped device identification information and key information to a group identifier, and for providing the grouped device identification information and the key information to all information devices in a device group, as recited in amended Claim 19. It is further submitted that independent Claim 19 patentably defines over any proper combination of Oho and Tanaka.

Turning to the rejection of Claim 20, the Office Action appears to acknowledge at page 14, lines 8-9, that Oho fails to disclose or suggest that the grouped device identification information and the key information provided from the information server are stored together with the group identifier. In rejecting this feature, the Office Action relies solely upon Tanaka. However, although the Tanaka device keys are associated with a category of equipment, the device keys are not provided to all devices in the category of equipment. Applicants respectfully submit that Oho and Tanaka, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest storing key information which is commonly provided to a device group, as recited in amended Claim 20. It is submitted that independent Claim 20 patentably defines over any proper combination of Oho and Tanaka.

New Claims 23-25 have been added to set forth the claimed invention in a varying scope. Applicants respectfully submit that new Claim 23 presents features in non-means-plus-function language related to the features recited in Claim 1. It is further submitted that new Claim 24 sets forth features in non-means-plus-function language related to the features recited in Claim 13. New Claim 25 presents features in non-step-plus-function language related to the features recited in Claim 13. No new matter is added.

Turning first to new Claim 23, Applicants submit that Tanaka is silent regarding to which portable devices a content can be copied. Applicants further submit that, although Tanaka discusses associating device keys with a category of equipment, the reference does not discuss commonly providing the device keys to the category of equipment. It is submitted that Tanaka does not disclose or suggest a unit configured to store user data

including key information which is commonly provided to a device group, as recited in independent Claim 23. Applicants further submit that Oho does not remedy this deficiency of Tanaka. Applicants therefore submit that new Claim 23 patentably defines over the references of record.

Turning to new Claim 24, Applicants submit that, as discussed previously, Tanaka does not discuss providing device keys to all devices in a category of equipment. Further, the Office Action apparently acknowledges that Oho does not disclose or suggest providing key information to all information devices in a device group. Applicants respectfully submit that Tanaka and Oho, taken alone or in combination, do not disclose or suggest a unit configured to associate grouped device identification information and key information to a group identifier and to provide the grouped device identification information and the key information to all information devices in a device group, as recited in new Claim 24. It is submitted that independent Claim 24 patentably defines over any proper combination of Tanaka and Oho.

Turning to new Claim 25, it is submitted that Tanaka does not discuss the provision of device keys to all of the devices within a category of equipment. Additionally, the Office Action appears to acknowledge that Oho does not disclose or suggest providing key information to all information devices within a device group. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that Tanaka and Oho, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest associating a group identifier with grouped device identification information and key information, and providing the grouped device identification information and the key

information to all information devices in a device group, as recited in new Claim 25.

Applicants further submit that independent Claim 25 patentably defines over any proper combination of Tanaka and Oho.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the foregoing comments, it is respectfully submitted that the invention defined by Claims 1-20 and 23-25 patentably defines over the applied references. The present application is therefore believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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